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## **NACo honors Cascade County as a national leader in creating sustainable communities**

### ***NACo award recognizes counties for enhancing communities***

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – The National Association of Counties (NACo) announced the winners of its 2005-2006 Center for Sustainable Communities Awards during its recent Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C.

The awards, presented by NACo's Center for Sustainable Communities, recognize the most effective and innovative county-led partnerships with private sector, faith-based or community groups in developing economically prosperous, environmentally safe, and socially equitable communities.

Cascade County, Mont., Montana Department of Environmental Quality, National Renewal Energy Laboratory, and Wind Powering America were recognized for their Cascade County Wind Power Marketing Program. Horseshoe Bend Wind Park is a reality, in part, because of an aggressive wind power marketing effort initiated by Cascade County Commissioner Peggy Beltrone in 2002. The nine megawatt wind park received assistance from several aspects of the county's marketing program. The county took initiative by improving their wind data maps and providing them free to developers. Their GIS maps proved to be better quality than any other maps available. As a result, the maps allowed them to more accurately pin-point successful wind farm sites and alleviate much of the risk for the developer. The project has won Cascade County national praise and the prize of being home to one of the state's first utility grade wind farms.

"I commend everyone involved in developing this outstanding community partnership," said NACo President Bill Hansell, Umatilla County (Ore.) Commissioner. "It is our hope that this national award will spotlight your community's great achievement and inspire others across the country to explore similar strategies to develop vibrant, sustainable communities."

The 12 communities honored were chosen by an expert panel of public and private sector leaders through a two-stage judging process.

Honorees will receive their awards during the 2005-2006 Sustainable Communities Awards Presentation Ceremony and Reception, 6-9 p.m., Thursday, April 27, at the Hyatt

Regency Washington on Capitol Hill, 400 New Jersey Ave., NW, Washington, D.C. The event is part of National County Government week April 23-29. In addition, the Center will announce three Outstanding Practice recipients (\$5,000 award) and one Platinum Innovation community recipient (\$10,000 award) in recognition of their accomplishments in sustainable community development.

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*NACo is a full-service organization that provides legislative, research, technical and public affairs assistance to county governments. Created in 1935, NACo continues to ensure that the nation's 3,066 counties are heard and understood in the White House and Congress. [www.naco.org](http://www.naco.org)*